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101: 081936Z JUN 90

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] THE JESUIT INCIDENT

COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJECT: ALLEGATIONS THAT SALVADORAN CHIEF OF JOINT GENERAL STAFF
PROTECTED A MILITARY OFFICER FROM PROSECUTION IN THE JESUIT MURDER
CASE

DOI: EARLY MAY 1990

TEXT: 1. [REDACTED] EL SALVADORAN

ARMED FORCES (ESAF) CHIEF OF STAFF RENE EMILIO ((PONCE)) PROTECTED LT. COL. CARLOS CAMILO ((HERNANDEZ)) FROM PROSECUTION IN THE JESUIT MURDER CASE. HERNANDEZ, [REDACTED] WAS THE OFFICER WHO ASSEMBLED ALL THE OFFICERS WHO ARE NOW UNDER ARREST IN THE JESUIT CASE. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE SOURCE DID NOT CLARIFY WHAT WAS MEANT BY HERNANDEZ ASSEMBLING THE OFFICERS.) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] COMMENT: HERNANDEZ WAS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE MILITARY SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE JESUIT MURDERS AND HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN NAMED IN ANY WAY IN THE CASE.) [REDACTED]

HERNANDEZ WAS TRANSFERRED TO BE DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE BELLOS BATTALION IN EARLY MARCH 1990. HE IS A FAVORITE OF PONCE AND, IN A MUCH TALKED ABOUT RECENT SHUFFLING OF CLASS RANKINGS, JUMPED CONSIDERABLY TO BECOME NUMBER ONE IN HIS CLASS.) [REDACTED]

COMMENT: THE JESUIT MURDER CASE REFERS TO THE MURDERS OF SIX JESUIT PRIESTS AND TWO LAY INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE MURDERED ON THE NIGHT OF 16 NOVEMBER 1989 BY MILITARY TROOPS. IT IS STILL UNCLEAR WHO ORDERED THE SOLDIERS TO COMMIT THE MURDERS AND AN INVESTIGATION IS STILL ENSUING.)

2. [REDACTED] COL. PONCE HAD CONFIDED THAT [REDACTED]

HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE PROMINENCE THAT COL. ROBERTO ((PINEDA)) GUERRA HAD OBTAINED THROUGH HIS CLOSE CONNECTIONS WITH SOME U.S. OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS. HE SAID PINEDA KNEW THAT PONCE HAD PROTECTED HERNANDEZ AND FEARED THAT PINEDA WOULD USE THIS INFO TO HARM PONCE AND CLEAR HIS (PINEDA'S) WAY TO THE TOP. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] COMMENT: COL. PINEDA WAS RECENTLY GIVEN COMMAND OF THE FOURTH BRIGADE IN CHALATENANGO, AND IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT PINEDA IS VERY AMBITIOUS AND OUTSPOKENLY CRITICAL OF THE CURRENT ESAF LEADERSHIP ("TANDONA"). HE WAS THE FIRST DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCHOOL AND BEFORE THAT WAS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTORATE (DNI).)

[REDACTED]

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4. THE FOLLOWING TIDBITS MAY BE OF INTEREST

A. PONCE'S HEALTH: DESPITE REPORTS HE IS BACK TO WORK IN GOOD HEALTH, [REDACTED] REPORTED THAT PONCE "LOOKS LIKE HELL," AND CLEARLY SHOWS HIS RECENT TRAUMA.

B. RESIGNATION OF SIU DIRECTOR MANUEL ANTONIO ((RIVAS)): RIVAS LEFT OUT OF FRUSTRATION. CHARGES BY THE JUSTICE MINISTER OF MISMANAGEMENT OF SIU FUNDS WERE THE LAST STRAW: HOWEVER THE ASSIGNMENT OF LT. COL JOSE EDUARDO ((ANGEL)) ORELLANA, AN EXCELLENT OFFICER, AS NEW COMMANDER OF THE BIRI ATACATL, INDICATED THAT THE EMC IS INTENT ON TREATING THIS CONTROVERSIAL UNIT AS IF NO PROBLEMS EXISTED. RIVAS COMPLAINS THAT EFFORTS TO GET ESAF COOPERATION IN HIS INVESTIGATION OF THE JESUIT KILLING HAVE BEEN CONSTANTLY FRUSTRATED BY THE EMC.

D. THE 1973 TANDA, WHICH INCLUDES LT. COL JUAN VICENTE ((EQUIZABAL)) FIGUEROA AND LT. COL CARLOS CAMILO ((HERNANDEZ)), ENJOYS A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE TANDONA (CAMILO IS A PONCE FAVORITE - HE WAS JUST GIVEN A MERITORIOUS AWARD EVEN THOUGH AS DEPT COMMANDER OF THE MILITARY SCHOOL HE WAS SUSPECT IN THE JESUIT CASE.)

E. D'AUBUISSON IS LOSING POWER WITHIN ARENA,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] MERINO IS NOT
PICKING UP THE FORMER D'AUBUISSON SUPPORTERS, NOR IS
COL (RET) OCHOA NOR SAN SALVADOR MAJOR CALDERON SOL. THE YOUNGER
ARENA MILITANTS ARE INCREASINGLY INDEPENDENT, AND THEIR
ALLEGIANCE UP FOR GRABS.

F. THE PRESIDENT OF THE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION,
DR. JOSE ARMANDO ((PENA)) ARQUETA, WHO WAS ASSASSINATED ON
4 JUNE WAS PREPARING CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST TWO AIR FORCE
OFFICERS ACCUSED OF EXTORTION AND THEFT. ABOUT THREE DAYS
BEFORE HE WAS KILLED HE PRESENTED PRELIMINARY CHARGES.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]